

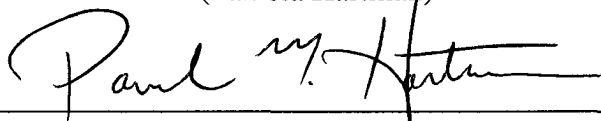
Hiding the Seams by Weaving in Culture:
Language Arts Lesson Plans, Prompts, and Resources that Integrate Culture

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

By

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Thesis Advisor
(Pamela Hartman)

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Pamela Hartman", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and stylized, with the first name "Pamela" and last name "Hartman" clearly legible.

Ball State University
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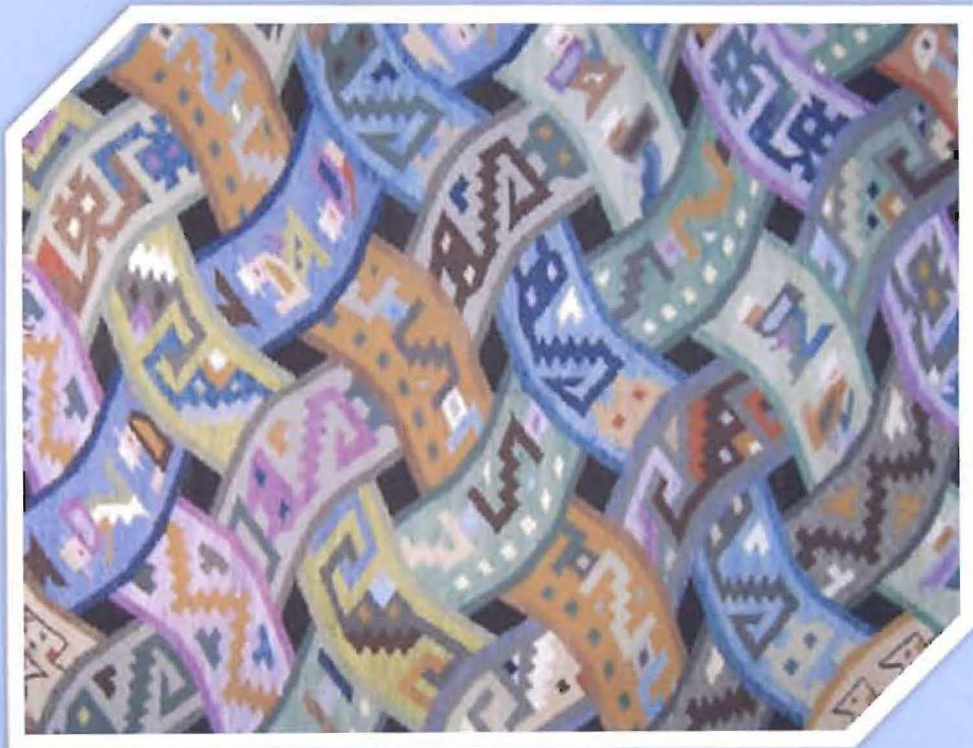
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JoyAnn Hirschy



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Abstract

HE7 My project is a resource on incorporating culture into a Language Arts classroom. Everything in my project sits under the umbrella theme of culture. Teaching culture incorporates a lot of what is vital to education, including awareness, understanding, exposure to different views, and critical thinking. A lot of teachers may have cultural units or teach about African Americans in February and women in March, but that is not enough. Cultural texts and lessons need to be integrated throughout the school year.

I created ten new lesson plans for this project and eleven creative writing prompts. I also penned sample responses to my own prompts and developed four activity webs. Each web contains ideas for pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activities that can be done with a class for different cultural young adult texts. Some of the lesson plans, prompts, and webs could be used on a wide range of grade levels, especially secondary students.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Pamela Hartman for advising me while I worked on this project. She provided me with texts to aide my endeavors. She has also advised other students before with their honors theses, thus making her a great resource on how I go about my project. She always provided good advice and encouragement. Beyond being my advisor, I have taken multiple courses from her as a professor. It is her skeleton lesson plan template that I have come to be the most comfortable with and used for this project. It was also in one of her courses that I first made an activity web. I had never felt comfortable writing lesson plans until I finished two of my methods courses with her. My lesson plans are not always conventional, but instead of deterring me, she has always encouraged my creativity. I still use most of the books her methods courses required as references and often use the ideas presented in them as a launch pad to create my own adaptation.

I would like to thank Dr. Rai Peterson. I had the privilege of being in three courses with her. She challenged me as a reader, writer, and thinker. She constantly pushed me to do better.

I would also like to thank Shasta Grant and Peter Davis. They taught the two Creative Writing courses I was able to fit into my schedule. Davis pushed me to new limits creatively, and Grant introduced me to the wonderful world of creative non-fiction writing.

I would like to thank one of my high school English teachers, Mrs. Kreigh, for being one of the first people that taught me how to and pushed me to think critically.

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Introduction

As a Teaching Major in English/Language Arts preparing to student teach the following semester, I originally set out to create a group of lesson plans to essentially give me more practice and to generate ideas I could use in the future. This binder includes lesson plans, creative writing prompts, activity ideas to go along with specific texts, and resources. Some of them could be used with a wide range of grade levels. However, I tend to write lessons with high school students in mind since that is the level I hope to teach. I wanted to feel more confident when entering schools and to gain more experience. I also wanted to create something that I could continue using as a resource in the field once I am in it. I hope that other pre-service educators can use this as a resource or idea generator as well.

Everything in this binder sits under the umbrella theme of culture. I chose this theme for several reasons. For starters, it is a very broad topic, which meant that I would have no problem coming up with ideas for a variety of grade levels. It lends itself to various parts of language arts, including some of my favorites such as poetry, slam poetry, and other literature. In addition, a multi-cultural curriculum incorporates a lot of what I believe to be vital to education, including awareness, understanding, exposure to different views, and critical thinking.

Middle school and high school years are the time that students stop being sheltered. They start seeing gray areas and become more capable of higher-level thinking. Introducing different cultures, perspectives, and so on can help students grow in their cognitive development. Cognitive development and identity formation are especially crucial during the time of adolescence. An integral part of cognitive development is the gaining of formal operational thought, which is Jean Piaget's final stage of cognitive development. Five major

changes occur during this stage and gradually mature throughout this stage and adolescence. Students achieve the ability to separate the real from the possible, becoming able to separate themselves from reality and think about other alternatives. They begin using hypothetical-deductive logic, the ability to form a hypothesis, test it, and draw conclusions from it. They also start become capable of combinational logic, which involves generating all possible combinations from a group of possibilities. Piaget considers the development of abstract symbolic thought to be the most important of the advancements, which begins developing between the ages of thirteen and fifteen.

Some people never reach this last stage. I think it is in students' and society's best interests to push students towards this level of thinking. This level is where they begin to comprehend abstract concepts, compare ideas at a higher level, and defend their ideas competently. All of these are elements I want present in my classroom, and I want to encourage students to reach for this level of cognitive ability through the lessons, activities, and texts I choose.

In addition, I am a firm believer in multi-cultural education. A lot of teachers may teach cultural units or teach about African Americans in February and women in March, but that is not good enough. Multi-cultural literature and content need to be integrated more often. African American writers such as Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. DuBois should not only be discussed in February. They should be discussed at various times throughout the school year. Multi-cultural literature and lessons should be integrated seamlessly. Instead of teaching The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian while discussing Native Americans, an educator could consider teaching it as part of a unit that is about family, relationships, or identity. There is nothing wrong with teaching a unit that focuses explicitly

on a particular culture or culture in general. However, just having one unit that covers a cultural topic does not certify the class as being multi-cultural. Cultural texts and lessons need to be integrated throughout the semester. By always separating them, it could potentially make them seem different in a negative way and deepen the divide. When addressing the issue of women's literature, high school teacher and published author Jim Burke argues:

If you introduce works by emphasizing they are written by women, implying that the class is reading it only because it is written by a woman (or some other specific group), it reduces the work's stature by suggesting it is special, different from the other, more serious works you normally read. Instead, just weave in the women, using a variety of texts in different media, to make them a seamless part of the course. (395)

Keeping texts or groups separate automatically sets them up to be treated as the "other," as something deviant from "normal" culture. This result is the polar opposite of what myself and other teachers should hope to achieve through integrating multi-cultural texts and lessons.

I wanted to create lesson plans that could be taught to various grade levels and could be incorporated into various units, texts, and themes. Multiple lesson plans in this project start out with quick writes. Quick writes can be a great activity to include in the planning, especially for the beginning of the period. They give the students something to do right away and allow the teacher time to take attendance or make sure things are in order for the lesson. They also provide writing practice and tap into the students' prior knowledge, which will help prepare them for the day's lesson.

Most of the lesson plans call for discussion. I think having a discussion-based classroom is a necessity for any English classroom. During discussion, students have the opportunity to share their ideas. Listening to and thinking over other students' ideas help students become better listeners and think more critically. When students hear an idea they disagree with, they often compare it to their own and may search for evidence to disprove one of the theories wrong. This activity encourages analytical thinking. During discussion, students are also prompted to provide evidence for their claims, which holds them accountable and helps them learn how to support their arguments. The discussion can be strengthened from questions the teacher asks. However, the teacher should only be the facilitator. It is important that the teacher relinquishes some of his/her authority and allows the students to go off in a different direction and raise issues they want to talk about. Wilhelm, Baker, and Dube Hackett explain that "...it is not simply enough to question students, or even to help them to more and more competent discussion of those questions. Instead it is a necessary, eventually, to put the responsibility of asking the questions into their power as well" (148). Allowing students to choose the direction of discussions or lead a class period allows them to explore the issues they are interested in and gives them confidence by sending the message that what they have to say is important. Sometimes a teacher taking a few steps back can have great effects.

Several of my lessons call for a project, often creative and/or research based in nature. Speaking from my own personal experience, I feel that creative projects are one of the best ways for students to learn. Students get to decide what the product is and how they will make it, allowing them to use their strengths, follow their interests, express themselves, and have a sense of ownership. Creative projects call for outside the box thinking and planning, both of

which engage and challenge students. I feel that requiring students to do independent research is a great habit for the classroom, as learning where to find information is an invaluable tool. When researching, students have to sift through dependable and as well as unreliable sources, which can help the students to become more critical readers.

As for the writing prompts, I have great faith in the power and importance of creative and informal writing in the classroom. Little activities, such as quick writes (an activity where students write informally for a few minutes in response to a prompt from the teacher) are wonderful ways to activate prior knowledge or to reflect. They also simply allow students to have a voice and give them an outlet. Responding to prompts encourages students to try new things and be creative. Another reason I chose to include them was to give myself an opportunity to write since creative writing has been a hobby of mine for years. Responding to the prompts, allows me to practice and show that part of my life. In addition, teachers should respond to the prompts they ask students to. Burke writes that, "Writing is an activity that forces thought: You cannot write without thinking, for to arrange language into meaningful units—sentences, phrases, poems, narratives—is to use the mind" (245). This shows part of why writing exercises at the beginning of a class period is useful. Carefully choosing prompts to get students thinking about what concepts, issues, texts, and so forth are coming up in that lesson or around the corner will give students a head start in their thinking, tap into their prior knowledge, and may make the lesson more meaningful or easier for them to relate to. Most of the prompts are not explicitly about culture, but all of them can be tied back into culture and used to introduce students to cultural concepts, themes, texts, and so forth that will be covered in the lesson or unit.

The activity part of my thesis, the webs, was not part of my original plan for this project. As I began brainstorming, I began looking into texts, notably young adult novels. I had planned on creating a resource list, including a list of texts that I thought could be useful in integrating culture into a classroom. I wanted to do more than just creating a resource list with some of the texts I came across, but I did not feel I could do the texts justice in one lesson plan and thought I could find a more useful format. Then I remembered the webbing project I did last semester in an English methods course. The assignment was to choose multiple pre-reading, during reading, and post-reading activities for a young adult novel. A teacher would in all likelihood not use all of the activities on such a web during one unit, but it would be a resource to get ideas and choose from for lessons. My webs do not have grade levels on them because webs can be altered and certain activities can be chosen to fit almost any grade level. Of course the text may call for a certain maturity level, but, for any grade level that can handle a certain text, the activities can be modified.

Some of the lessons, prompts, and web activities also allow for cross-curriculum overlap. Connecting my content area to other areas can be beneficial to student learning. Instead of keeping all the information they are learning compartmentalized, they can begin to see the connections between bits of information and subject areas. Pulling in other subject areas can also reinforce the information and/or show it from a different angle, which can help comprehension. Some of the lessons and prompts overlap and could easily be paired together. These could also be potential areas for working with other teachers from other disciplines.

The resource section starts off with a list of recommended and potential resources for teachers, including cultural books suitable for secondary classrooms, movies that could tie in

with cultural lessons, and teacher resource books. I also decided to include various sample worksheets that could tie in with the lesson plans or webs. I also have copies of two poems that fit the America lesson plan well. The poems were from an anthology entitled Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry. This book is a wonderful resource for both Language Arts and Social Studies teachers. It provides a wide assortment of first-hand stories of individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Several of the poems are in regards to their experiences growing up in America. Last but not least I also included the quick write rubric that I mention in multiple lesson plans.

Through this project and other course work this semester, I now feel more confident in my lesson plans and teaching ideas. I learned how easy it is to integrate culture. While some of my lesson plans and prompts regard culture more explicitly than others, culture is the theme that runs through all of them. Culture does not always have to be the focus of lessons; sometimes just having culture present in them is enough. The idea behind my theme is not to force all lessons and units to be about culture. The idea is to integrate culture frequently and naturally into readings, lesson plans, discussions, and more. For example, one of the easiest and best ways to include culture is through the texts a teacher chooses. A teacher needs to choose a variety of texts from a variety of backgrounds, viewpoints, and cultures.

Throughout this process my goals transcended from being about my own progression to being about showing others how easy and important it is to integrate culture. When teaching culture, it does not always have to be announced. If culture were to be interwoven seamlessly into the curriculum, it would become a regular part of students' education. Students could be learning about culture without even consciously knowing it. Not only is

interweaving culture beneficial to students' growth intellectually, but also I would like to think that it would be beneficial to humanity and could help to further promote acceptance and understanding.

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Hiding the Seams by Weaving in Culture

Lesson Plans

JoyAnn Hirschy



Archetypes

Focus:

This lesson plan is for 10-12 graders. It is good to expose younger students to some of these ideas, but I have more mature thinkers in mind for my activities. This lesson could fit in well with most texts. It could also fit in well with a unit on story components, characterization, culture, or a particular genre (i.e. epics or fairy tales). It could also be expanded into a unit of its own or shortened into a mini-lesson rather easily. The activities I propose would take a minimum of three days.

Objectives:

1. Students will become familiar with the term and concept of archetypes.
2. Students will practice their research skills.
3. Students will effectively work independently and with others by completing tasks and participating in discussions.
4. Students will be able to recognize and know characteristics of multiple archetypes, and they will know about at least one archetype in depth.
5. Students will connect the concept of archetypes and archetypal figures to texts they read previously in the semester.

Materials:

- PowerPoint
- Computer
- Adapter
- Projector
- Screen
- Board
- Marker/Chalk
- Paper
- Writing Utensil
- Handouts
- Research materials (i.e. computers, books, library)

Strategies:

- Independent work
- Small group work
- Whole class discussion
- Tapping into prior knowledge/review
- Multimedia presentation
- Lecture
- Creative/Research Project
- Brainstorming

Procedure:

Day 1

1. Start a class discussion to prompt prior knowledge. Get the class thinking about characters that are repeated. Make a list of the ones they come up with.
2. Lecture on archetypes.
3. Use a PowerPoint presentation to show visual images of characters they would be familiar with to represent various archetypes. Give a little information on those archetypes. Ask for evidence on how that archetype fits that character.
4. Provide the students with a reference worksheet of the most common archetypes and examples of those.
5. Have them get into groups of 2-3. Ask the groups to think about texts they have read for the class thus far in the school year/semester. Tell them to brainstorm a list of characters from those texts and try to determine if each character fits into an archetype and if so which one.
6. Discuss the activity/results as a class.
7. For homework ask the students to brainstorm and write down a few ideas on why archetypes are important and on why story tellers use them.

Day 2

1. Review the questions the class was asked to consider for homework.
2. Discuss their ideas.
3. Briefly lecture if they left some of the reasons uncovered.
4. Collect their slips of paper that they were to have written ideas on for homework.
5. Tell them that tomorrow they have to have an archetype chosen that they want to do a research project on.
6. Review research tips and skills with them.
7. Take them to the computer lab and let them use the rest of the time researching archetypes.

Day 3

1. Write down each student's archetype as they enter the room.
2. Give the students the guidelines and handout an explanation of the project.
3. Allow them to use the rest of the time to brainstorm, research, or begin their project.

Day 4 - Depending on the teacher's goals and time restraints, choose one of the following:

- Segue into next topic/unit and move on, having the students work independently on their projects and turning them in after a reasonable period of time.
- Continue working on archetypes but give no more class time.
- Continue working on archetypes and giving class time for progress.

Evaluation:

Objective 1 can be informally observed and will become evident when the students begin working independently. Their ability to research and work independently will become evident as to how they use class work time and the sources they find (Objectives 2 and 3). Students will have to use Objective 4 to be able to complete their project. Objective 5 can be informally assessed by walking around and observing the group discussions on the first day. The students will be asked to create a creative research project (i.e. brochure,

scrapbook, a tale of their own with their archetype in it and a written explanation). They will be given guidelines to follow and a rubric will be used to evaluate the final product, which will be for a grade. If the students were struggling or slacking with the research, the teacher could also require a research journal to be graded.

Using Slam Poetry to Discuss Cultural Issues

Focus:

The focus of this lesson is not to introduce slam poetry. This lesson would work better if students were already familiar with that genre. I created this lesson with the idea of putting it at the beginning of a new unit. The lesson is to expose students to controversial issues regarding culture (i.e. ethnicity, conformity, gender) that they will face in the unit and in other texts. It is to get the students talking and thinking about these topics. The teacher could easily select videos that narrow the topic to only being about gender or immigration for example, or they could select videos that are broad and bring up several topics.

Objectives:

1. Students will think critically about the poetry and performances.
2. Students will contribute to a classroom discussion on culture.
3. Students will form opinions about the poems and about culture and be able to express them clearly.
4. Students will become familiar with topics to prepare them for the unit ahead.

Materials:

- Computer
- Projector
- Videos
- Paper
- Writing utensil

Strategies:

- Multimedia/Videos
- Whole class discussion
- Silent discussion (if needed)
- Quick write

Procedure:

1. If students are not already familiar with the genre of slam poetry then that needs to be introduced to them before beginning this lesson plan.
2. Select slam poetry videos (youtube.com has a lot of them). Pick ones that are controversial and deal with cultural issues/topics. Make sure to consider the age group in choosing. Some of the best ones have foul language – okay to have some with foul language if the message/topic is a vital one, if that video is the strongest one, if the teacher is comfortable showing it, and if the class is mature enough to handle it.
3. View the videos and discuss. If choose videos under one umbrella theme then I would wait to discuss after viewing all of them. If videos address multiple themes then I would have short discussions after each video and an all-encompassing discussion at the end.
4. If students are reluctant to participate, consider incorporating the silent discussion. In a silent discussion students write down two questions, then pass the paper to the right, then

answer a question and ask a new question, then pass the paper to the right, then answer a question and either ask a new question or reply to someone else's comments, etc.

5. Quick write. Write a response to one of the videos we viewed today either in paragraph or poetic form.

Evaluation:

All of the objectives can be assessed informally through observation of the discussion and reading the free writes. Though, the free writes could be graded as an entry if the teacher has the students journal.

Possible Videos to View:

- "Hands" by Sarah Kay at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuAbGJBvIVY&feature=related>
- "Mike Check" by Suheir Hammad at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_q11Nnba3iQ&feature=related
- "Slip of the Tongue" by Adriel Luis at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-yu-SZP7ew&feature=related>
- "Like you know" by Taylor Mali at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SCNIBV87wV4&feature=related>
- "Little Red Books" by Kelly Tsai at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Jgr2c_QvqM&feature=related
- "What's Genocide" by Carlos Andres Gomez at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMK-rHaYD50&NR=1>

Interacting with Visuals

Focus: This lesson could be done with any grade level 7-12. It could work to introduce late middle school students to visual literacy and get them to start thinking about the connection between art and literature. Whereas, this lesson could prompt juniors and seniors to do advanced analytical thinking. This lesson could tie in well with numerous units such as a unit on reading visuals, on poetry, or on cultures.

Objectives:

1. Students will make an attempt to both interpret and respond to art, which will improve their visual literacy skills.
2. Students will think analytically about how to read visuals and about the differences/similarities of reading a text vs. a picture.
3. Students will participate in discussion and collaborate in small groups.

Materials:

- Printed art pieces
- Handout with questions
- Paper
- Writing utensil

Strategies:

- Class discussion
- Small group discussion
- Quick-writes

Procedure:

1. Put 5-10 printed out art pieces from various countries on the board.
2. Ask the students to select one (have at least a couple copies of each ready), and hand them a copy of the one they chose.
3. Ask the students to write one or two paragraphs (depending on the grade level and teacher's preference) about what they think their selected piece is about.
4. Have the students do a creative writing prompt. They must write a poem or short story about either what was going on in the mind/life of the artist when they created the piece or about the story/meaning of the piece itself.
5. Have the students group with other students that selected the same piece and discuss both their interpretive paragraphs and their prompt responses.
6. Once the discussion begins dying down, give each group a handout of additional questions to consider.
7. Once the groups are done with that, bring them back for a full class discussion.
8. Discuss with the full class the questions on that handout.

Evaluation:

Objective one will be assessed when I read their responses. I will use their interpretation and creative piece to see where students are in their ability to read visuals. Their writing will be graded, but if they did what they were asked they will receive full credit. It will only be worth a few points. Objectives two and three will be informally evaluated through my observations of their participation during small and large group discussion.

Sample art works that could be used:

- http://www.israeliartprints.com/pictures/Jerusalem_1926.jpg - Jerusalem 1926 by Reuven Rubin (Israeli art)
- http://lemonfish.geo.gm/_library/2007/11/orangebaobab.jpg - (Gambian)
- <http://artnatam.com/dtiger/large/n-dt011.jpg> - Voluntary Action by Dana Tiger (Native American)
- <http://www.spanisharts.com/prado/velazquez/meninas.htm> - The Maids of Honour by Velazquez (Spanish)
- http://www.theartwolf.com/services/wallpapers/hokusai_1280-800.jpg - The Great Wave Off Kanagawa by Hokusai (Japanese)
- http://farm1.static.flickr.com/166/430497182_c305ec7bb2.jpg?v=0 – by Janiz Chan (Malaysian)
- <http://www.haitianmasters.net/abnerdubic.htm> - 3 paintings here by Abner Dubic (Haitian)

Sample questions that could be on handout:

- In what ways are reading a text and piece of art the same and different?
- How do book illustrations affect you as a reader?
- Is it necessary to know the context of a piece of art before interpreting it? What about for a story or poem?
- Can we interpret art from other cultures just as well as art from our own? Why?
- Should what culture art comes from matter to the viewer or interpretation?
- Does art need translating or does it transcend language/cultural barriers?
- Does our culture affect our interpretations?

Individual and Family Shields

Focus:

This lesson plan could be used with any secondary classroom. It could easily fit in several pieces of literature (i.e. *Romeo and Juliet*, a piece on King Arthur, almost any piece on family and/or set in medieval times). It could fit into multiple units such as ones that focuses on family, legacy, identity, or symbolism. Also this could be tweaked or used again to have students create a symbol for a character and a shield for the character's fictional family. This lesson could also be easily tied in with the totem lesson plan I created. This could be a quick one day activity. However, if the teacher wants the students to put more thought and work into their shields – they could give them the end of day one to brainstorm and give them all of day two to create the shield and perhaps to write an explanation.

Objectives:

1. The students will understand the term and concept of “legacy.”
2. The students will use their knowledge of symbolism to create their personal symbols and other images on their shields.
3. The students will think critically about their family's identity through the discussions, brainstorming, and creating the shield.

Materials:

- Art supplies (markers, colored pencils, etc.)
- Craft paper (i.e. card stock, construction paper, butcher paper)
- Scissors
- Adhesives (glue and tape)
- Paper
- Writing utensil
- White board
- Dry erase marker

Strategies:

- Quick write
- Whole class discussion
- Brainstorming
- Advanced organizers
- Kinesthetic/creative activity

Procedure:

1. Quick write: What is legacy? What item in your household could represent your family's legacy (i.e. family tree, family crest, item with family name carved into it)? What item could represent your own legacy or identity?
2. Discuss the term and idea of legacy.
3. Have the students create a symbol that could be part of a shield to represent them personally.
4. Discuss the importance of family identity.

5. Brainstorm a list of items used to represent family legacy, identity, or both with the class. Put them up on the board as you go.
6. Discuss and show examples of family crests/shields.
7. Have the students create a shield that represents their family and also that incorporates the symbol they came up with for themselves.
8. Have the students write a paragraph explaining their choice of personal symbol and the choices they made in making the shield.

Evaluation:

Objective 1 will be assessed through the quick write and discussion. Quick writes are graded according to a rubric and are worth 6 points. Objective 2 will be evident through the student's explanation for the symbol they choose. Objective 3 will be assessed through the final product and the explanation. The number of points the final shield is worth and what it is graded on should be based on how much work time the students are given and the teacher's goals.

The Culture of War

Focus:

What I picture for this idea is rather large scale, involving teaming up with a Social Studies teacher and creating a unit versus just a few days. Students could read texts such as Tim O'Brien's *The Things they Carried*, stay up to date on current events on wars being fought today, read poetry on war, and learn the history of a specific war or on wars in general. There are also several documentaries that could tie in well such as *Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam*, *Iraq in Fragments*, or *War Letters: American Experience*. I think this unit would be best for 10th -12th grades. This lesson plan would be day one of a unit, a sort of introduction to get the students thinking about these concepts and will be discussion based. Also, since people tend to be very opinionated about war, this lesson would have to take place after a strong classroom environment has been set in motion to try to ensure that students will listen and speak respectfully to each other. It would also help if the students sat in a circle. The teacher's preferred role is to ask questions but to sit back and let the students do the thinking and discussing.

Objectives:

1. Students will be introduced to the main ideas and questions they will deal with throughout the unit.
2. Students will begin to think critically about war.
3. Students will listen to what others' views are and give them consideration.

Materials:

- Paper
- Writing utensil
- White board
- Marker

Strategies:

- Quick write
- Cues and questions
- Advanced organizer
- Whole class discussion

Procedure:

1. Quick write: Define war. What are your views on war in general? How have the wars the U.S. has been involved in during your lifetime affected you?
2. Write the dictionary definition of war on the board.
3. Ask whether or not the students disagree with that definition.
4. Ask the students to share how their definitions differed or aligned with that.
5. Discuss who and what war effects.
6. Discuss whether war is ever justified.

7. Does war have its own culture? What is the culture of war? How is war culture different from civilian culture?

Evaluation:

The quick write will be graded according to the 6 point rubric. The objectives will be observed by the students' thoughts and their responses to other students.

Fairytale Versions

Focus:

This unit could be done with any age group, but I had 10th-12th grade in mind when planning this lesson. While many may consider fairy tales to be “kids stuff,” I think they go beyond that. I think it is important for high school students to see that. The students will also need to read closely and think critically to be able to compare and contrast the two versions effectively. I could not decide if I wanted students to write a paper or do a creative project as the assignment I refer to. I think it could depend on the teacher’s goals and perhaps on which one the students had not done in a while.

Objectives:

1. Students will see fairytales as more than just “kids’ stuff” and begin to see them as a genre.
2. Students will be able to compare and contrast two versions of a story within the same genre.
3. Students will be able to locate versions and research independently.

Materials:

- Library resources (computers, books, etc.)
- 2 different book versions of one fairytale
- White board
- Marker
- Paper
- Writing utensil

Strategies:

- Independent research
- Reading aloud
- Class discussion
- Lecture
- Graphic organizers
- Compare/Contrast

Procedure:

Day 1:

1. Read a version of a fairytale that the students are probably familiar with.
2. Discuss and lecture the genre of fairytales and literary elements.
3. Read a version of the same fairytale from a different country than the first that the students have probably never heard.
4. Compare and contrast the two versions through class discussion and a Venn diagram.
5. Discuss whether one version is better than another.
6. Lecture briefly on fairytale versions.
7. Explain the assignment and that they need to select a fairytale.

Day 2:

1. Take the class to the library.
2. Tell them to have selected and found two or more versions of their fairytale by the end of the period.
3. They then need to read the versions and show proof of active reading (questions, notes, underlining, etc.). If they run out of time to read the texts, then that is their homework for the night.
4. If they get all of that done and have time left, they can look at more versions or research the history of the tale.

Day 3:

1. Students will be asked to create and complete a graphic organizer comparing two or more versions. (i.e. Venn diagram, chart)
2. We will then go over their assignment options more in detail.
3. The students will then be given time to brainstorm project ideas, which they can run past each other or me for feedback.

Day 4:

1. The students have the entire period to work on the assignment in class.

Evaluation:

The graphic organizer and assignment will be graded according to rubrics. The first objective will be observed informally by listening to students during discussions and work time. It may also become evident through their work. The second objective will be assessed through the graphic organizer and assignment. The students will not be able to complete the assignments without being able to meet the third objective.

Totems

Focus:

This lesson plan could be taught in any grade level and could easily be taught in the same unit as the Individual and Family Shields Lesson Plan. This obviously fits in with a unit on Native American literature, but there are many other units it could fit into that may not be as apparent, including a unit on family, legacy, history, culture, symbolism, memories, or identity. I think it is important for students to have a strong understanding of the significance and history of totem poles before attempting to create their own. I expect them to be able to explain each choice they make in creating their totem pole. For what I have in mind, the students would be allowed to create their totem pole however they wish such as sketching, painting, and carving. It would work best for this lesson to be followed by a story that includes totems or a different object representative of family in a meaningful way.

Objectives:

1. Students will know the history and significance of totem poles.
2. Students will support each of the creative choices they make through research and reasoning.
3. Students will connect the ideas of this project to the texts that precede and follow this lesson.
4. Students will apply their knowledge of symbolism to this project.

Materials:

- Children's story
- KWL charts
- Video on totem poles
- Writing utensil
- Project handout
- Books and computers for research
- Art supplies
- PowerPoint
- Adapter
- Computer

Strategies:

- Reading aloud
- Graphic organizer
- Lecture
- Multimedia (video and PowerPoint slides)
- Independent research
- Creative project

Procedure:

Day one:

1. Read a short children's story to the class that has to do with totem poles.
2. Have students fill out a KWL chart about what they know and want to know about totem poles. Ask them to continue adding to this over the next few days.
3. Discuss what the students to know.
4. Lecture about totem poles.
5. Show a video clip on how totem poles are made.
6. Let students know that they will be making their own totem poles and writing a short paper reflecting on their choices and symbolism. Explain the assignment.

Day two:

1. Read a piece or watch a video that discusses the significance of totem poles to families and identities.
2. Discuss the choices that must be made when making a totem pole and how those decisions are made (i.e. which animals to select).
3. Show examples of different styles and kinds of totem poles on PowerPoint slides.
4. Give them time to research.
5. Let them know they will have work time on Day 3 and to bring materials in if needed tomorrow.

Day three:

1. Reiterate important parts of the assignment.
2. Give time for students to ask questions.
3. Give students the rest of the time to work.

Day four:

1. Work time

Day five:

1. Project, paper, and KWL due.
2. Segue this lesson into the follow story.
3. Begin that story and its activities.

Evaluation:

The KWL is worth a small amount of points and will be graded on completion and evidence of thought. The project and paper would be graded according to rubrics. Objective one can be assessed through the KWL charts and class discussions. Objective two will be assessed through the paper they have to write explaining and backing up their choices. Objective three will be informally observed and the teacher can check on and help students' ability to make connections through cues and questions. The fourth objective will be evident through the final project and paper.

*Nadia the Willful***Focus:**

This text has been used in middle school classrooms in the Anderson School Corporation in Indiana. My idea for this lesson stems off of what another pre-service teacher did with this text. This lesson plan and text could be a frontloading activity for students to segue into another text that deals with memories, narratives, oral history, culture, and/or family. This lesson could be tweaked to fit most grade levels. The story centers on a girl in a middle-eastern tribe. The activity I had in mind for students to do is to have text in the center of a piece of paper that is a description of the person important to them, an explanation of why the person is important to them, a poem about the person, or a story involving the person. Then they are to draw pictures that remind them of that person. They could draw one large picture that covers the entire sheet and is the background of the text. They could draw several small pictures around the text. They can draw objects the person has given them, places they have been to with that person, some of that person's favorite things, etc.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to make connections between their lives and the text.
2. Students will be prepared to take these issues/topics to a deeper level and a more mature text.

Materials:

- Marker
- White board
- Worksheets
- Paper
- Writing utensil
- *Nadia the Willful* by Sue Alexander
- Art supplies

Strategies:

- Quick write
- Vocabulary
- Reading aloud
- Class discussion
- Drawing

Procedure:

1. The students will quick write about an important person in their lives.
2. As they are writing, I will write the words that are in the text that they may not know (i.e. Allah, sheik, Bedouin) and the definitions to go along with those terms.
3. When they are finished, we will read over the vocabulary together. I will read the terms aloud and ask for a volunteer to read the definition.

4. Then I will read Nadia the Willful aloud to the class, pausing to show pictures and ask questions throughout the reading.
5. Then we will discuss the book as a class.
6. I will pass out the worksheets and explain the activity to the students.
7. The students will have access to art supplies and will have most of the rest of the period to work on their sheet.
8. At the end I will go around and ask for volunteers to share what they did.

Evaluation:

The objectives will be informally assessed by gathering information from the students' quick writes, activity work, and discussion participation. The activity would be worth five points for completion.

America

Focus:

This lesson could take place at any place under a number of topics. It could fit it easily with texts about immigration, moving, culture, countries, group identity, and more. It would work with any age level, though the poems I have in mind would be more suitable for high school students. The main goal is to get students to think about the concept of America critically.

Objectives:

1. Students will begin to think critically about America by listening to and reading other points of views.
2. Students will work effectively with small groups to decipher and discuss a poem.

Materials:

- Paper
- Writing utensil
- Board
- Marker
- Poem handouts

Strategies:

- Quick write
- Graphic organizer
- Class discussion
- Small group discussion
- Cues and Questions

Procedure:

1. Have the students quick write on what they think of when they hear the word "America."
2. Ask students to share their ideas and web them on the board as they go.
3. Have a discussion using question prompts such as: How do you think America would look to an outsider or newcomer? Do we have expectations of what we expect immigrants to do once they begin living here?
4. Divide the students into small groups.
5. Give each group a couple poems on various aspects of what America is or what it means to be an American.
6. Ask the groups to discuss the poems and to focus on the poem's message, point of view, and validity.
7. Come back as a class to discuss the poems and the students' thoughts.

Evaluation:

Objective one will be informally assessed through the quick writes, which will be graded according to the rubric, and the discussions. I had originally thought to have objective two be assessed informally by walking around during small group

discussion. However, if the class has a tendency to struggle with group work then a participation grade could be used in an attempt to make them take it more seriously.

Resources:

- Gillan, Maria Mazziotti and Jennifer Gillan Ed. Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry. New York: Penguin Books, 1994.

The Art of Memoir

Focus:

This assignment would best suit an upper level high school English course or a creative writing course. All of the book choices will be about a person in a country that is not the U.S (i.e. *Chinese Cinderella*). What I had in mind for the student memoir was that they would write an account of a significant event in their lives (think chapter from a memoir) and be required to include information about the location, country, and time period (a.k.a. provide the reader with a historical context).

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to define non-fiction and memoir.
2. Students will become familiar with the memoir genre and learn about life in another culture through reading their assigned book.
3. Students will learn about the technical aspects of creative non-fiction and use that knowledge to create their own.
4. Students will learn how to provide historical context in writing and become more aware of their own context in the process.

Materials:

- White board
- Marker
- Multiple copies of the book choices
- Literature circle calendar handouts
- Autobiographical/non-fiction short stories
- *Chinese Cinderella* web (teacher reference)

Strategies:

- Advanced organizer
- Whole class discussion
- Lecture
- Literature circles
- Writing

Procedure:

Day 1:

1. Write the term nonfiction on the board and have students list characteristics of the genre out loud.
2. Write the term memoir on the board and ask what that changes.
3. Discuss.
4. Lecture on the two terms.
5. Tell them what the book choices are and explain what the books are about.
6. Have them list their preferred choices in order.

Day 2:

1. Assign the books and book groups.
2. Pass out the literature circle calendars.
3. Give the groups time to get together to decide what pages need to be read by what day and to decide who will lead the discussion and who will be the note taker at each meeting. (Everyone must be each role once each)
4. Move on to other material.

After:

Give book groups times to meet periodically over the next few weeks. The students will discuss what they have just read and any prompts I give them that day at those meetings. While that is going on, have the students read short non-fiction and autobiographical short stories. Discuss the ideas presented in these texts and the writing. Some of the activities from the *Chinese Cinderella* web would also be used. Have students write a response to the books when they finish it. Have the students write a short memoir and go through the writing process (brainstorming, rough draft, peer revision, etc)

Evaluation:

The book response, participation in the lit circle, and their personal memoir will all be graded according to rubrics. Objective one will be observable through the students discussions and by checking for understanding. Objective number two will be assessed by circulating the room to listen to book group meetings and through reading their book response paper. Objective three and four will be assessed informally through discussions on the short pieces and formally through their own memoir.

Hiding the Seams by Weaving in Culture

Prompts and Sample Responses

JoyAnn Hirschy



Prompt #1: Poetic Response to Slam Poetry Video

Write a poem or paragraph in response to one of the slam poetry videos viewed in class. (i.e. What could you relate to? What did you agree or disagree with? What thoughts did it prompt?) Make sure to write on your paper which one you're responding to. (Goes along with Slam Poetry Lesson Plan)

Chosen video: "Like you know" by Taylor Mali

So have you ever like noticed
That when people start talking about the word "like"
And how they frickin' hate when people use it like
All the time
They start saying it like every other word?

Um and have you ever compared
A ya know female speaker
To a like male one?
I heard an uh accomplished woman
Speak yesterday.
This chick is a professor
And um totally has books published
And um articles and everything.
She um said "um" a lot.
Her statements did not like
Strike me as confident.

I mean like talking like this is a plague
For our like generation and stuff,
But it totally goes beyond that.
Women don't seem to like know
How to not end their sentences in a question.
Why?
Do we constantly need approval?
Are we afraid of being seen as assertive,
Since like ya know
Apparently all assertive women are bitches?
Do we pick it up from our friends?
Isn't it like encouraged by society?
After all these years and "progress,"
You would think we could make a statement.
I'm not sure we know how.
That worries me.

(March 25, 2009)

Prompt #2: Creative Response to Art Piece

Select one of the pictures from the board. Write a poem or short story about either what was going on in the mind/life of the artist when they created the piece or about the story/meaning of the piece itself. (This prompt was used in my Interacting with Visuals lesson plan)



http://www.israeliartprints.com/pictures/Jerusalem_1926.jpg - Jerusalem 1926 by Reuven Rubin

Jerusalem

I have finally returned
To my homeland
And that of my people.

Oh Jerusalem,
Walls surround you,
Separating you.
Invisible walls
Grow higher within you.

You look so peaceful here.
How long will it last until
The next stone is thrown,
The next ripple?

Such a beautiful,
Holy land
Slowly turning to rubble.
Once all of what has been built
Falls,
Will the battle cease?

(March 15, 2009)

Prompt #3: Favorite Fairytale Version

Explain in a poem or paragraph which version of the fairy tale you chose for the project did you like best? Why? An alternative would be to reflect on multiple versions in a creative way (i.e. poem, sketch).

A Woman of Many Shoes

Symbol of the American dream
Pulled yourself up by your heel straps
Rags to ball gowns

The fair damsel in distress
Waiting around for her prince
Infuriating feminists

Poor indentured servant
Slaving away by the fire
Pitied soul, a case of domestic abuse

Beauty queen
Letting fairy dust clog that little head
Developing the royal attitude quickly

Idolized by thousands of young girls
Fronting endless merchandise
Did you want this

Strong woman
Taking life into her own calloused hands
Having the heart to survive
Determination to go to the ball
Wisdom to only take him after he knows
And embraces the real no frills you

Cinderella
So many ways to see one woman

You're a paradox
Sometimes you make your stepmother dance in hot iron shoes
Other times you show mercy on your stepsisters
Sometimes you're damsel in distress
Sometimes you're heroine
Maybe it makes you more human

As for me, well,
I say you rescued yourself

(Written June 08, Revised February, 3, 2009)

Prompt #4: Short Story on Holiday Celebrations

Write a short story walking the reader through the holiday celebrations you and your family go through on a holiday of your choice. Be sure to include some of your holiday traditions.

Another Holiday

I have this tendency with the bigger holidays to look forward to them with childlike anticipation. While this is enjoyable and gives me something to look forward to when I'm stuck at my desk trying to get through an all-nighter writing my big lit paper I had naturally, opportunely put off, this doesn't work as well as it used to. As I have gotten older, or heck maybe it's always been this way and I've forgotten, I have noticed that my anticipation bests the actual day. I fill my head with all of these wonderments for my favorite holidays only to be let down when the day comes. It's not that the day itself sucked or didn't live up to my expectations, it's that the anticipation was so great that no matter what happens I'm going to feel a little let down because the thing I had been anticipating for weeks is now over. Sometimes anticipation is just better than the actual event and is unable to be surpassed.

Holidays get both better and worse as I get older. (If you are under the age of 11 or have an overactive imagination please skip the next sentence.) On one hand I don't believe in Santa or the Easter Bunny anymore, which are great stories to tell kids but are a huge let down when they find out the truth. That discovery and the onset of fatalistic maturity take away some of the fun and excitement of holidays. By that same token, being an adult is supposed to make you appreciate holidays more. You can now carry on a real conversation with adult relatives, can appreciate the holiday for what it really is, and become more thankful for the gathering of family.

Naturally, this Thanksgiving I was slightly disappointed when the day came and killed my anticipation along with thousands of innocent turkeys. Turkey does taste good, but I almost feel bad about so many of them getting killed for a holiday tradition. My mom, sister, and I used to bake the cookies the night before and stay up until the wee hours frosting them. Mind you, these are not your average frosted sugar cookies. She has cutouts for each holiday. Thanksgiving ones are usually squirrels, leaves, and turkeys. Oh no, the grandeur does not stop there. The squirrels are brown with eyes or rather eye one per each it's a side shot ya see. The leaves alternate between orange and yellow. The turkeys are the crown jewel with a brown body, an orange fan (the feathers that stand up), a yellow beak and feet, and a red wattle (the thing that hangs under there neck that no one knows what it's called-it's okay neither did I until a minute ago). We also do this for Christmas and Easter with different cutouts of course. Oh, and mom was so giddy this year she actually danced a little while doing the eyes. Why? Because in years past she tries to make as close of a color to black as she can with the food coloring she has – this turns out purplish. This year she actually found black food coloring, I know, isn't that exciting. I know your feet are jiggling away at that under the table you're sitting at. Anyway, the past few years she ends up baking them late enough the night before that they don't get frosted until Thanksgiving morning. I did mix the batter for her though the night before, it was the first year she had never done it she was like a back seat driver. Guess what? They tasted just like they always do. When I rolled out of bed Thanksgiving morning, I

went out and helped her finish frosting while trying to watch bits and pieces of the Macy's parade from the kitchen counter. Rachael woke up and got the ever-exciting job of peeling potatoes, I was glad it wasn't me, while mom and I began the deviled eggs. A few hours later after everything was prepared, my sister and I harassed my mom to get ready. She claims to have been a tomboy in her youth, but she takes eons to fix her hair. Once we finally got her and all of the food into the car it was about five or ten minutes after we were already supposed to be at my grandparents. The arrival. After trying to carry everything in on one load between all of us, which is not an easy feat (2 plates of cookies, 2 Pepsi's, deviled eggs, and cheeseball), we made it inside the Mecca for all holidays: my grandparents' house. Surprisingly, we weren't the last ones but one of the first this year to arrive. Hugs and Happy Thanksgiving's float around the room wafting over me. Tim and Jess are running late, mom has me call them. I get a hold of them as they're pulling in. Once they get settled in we all stand in an abnormally shaped circle while my grandpa prays. He likes the phrase "dear Lord" a lot. Once the prayer is over some people stand around talking while others rush to fill plates. I do a little talking and then rush. I pile my plate with what I usually do on Thanksgiving: a little cheeseball and crackers, two deviled eggs, a roll, green bean casserole, macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes, and turkey. I go out to the porch (it's closed in now) and sit with my little cousin Jacob at a table. I tried to get him to talk about school, he's pretty quiet sometimes. After a while I gave up, I was afraid I was torturing the kid or something. Then one of my uncles and my sister joined me. After everyone was done eating, half of the people there had started watching *Ratatouille*, which I've heard is cute but didn't want to watch on Thanksgiving. We used to let our food settle while chattering and then the games began. The past few years someone sticks in a movie, which delays game time. So I sat out on the porch with my mom, one set of aunt and uncle, grandparents, and little cousins. We all tried to entertain the kids especially the girl she is high energy and giggles high-pitched hysterically at everything. If she's not giggling there's a fifty percent chance she's crying. She has a flare for the dramatic.

Once the movie ended my brother and sister-in-law showed us their wedding album, my one aunt looked jealous. Then some of the guys and kids went to the church to play basketball, June, Pattie, and mom went to let out dogs. So I indiscriminately struck piano keys trying to produce a coherent song of sorts. When mom returned we played *Uno Attack* with Sherri. Then when more people came back we played *Win Lose or Draw*. We talked my grandparents into playing too. My grandma laughed uncontrollably every time it was her turn to draw throughout the duration of her turn. Most of the other people that had left returned and it was time for early dinner leftovers. There was a sad attempt at playing charades. Someone came up with the idea to play that game, which is fine, but they didn't want to have teams or keep score. Now I may not be very competitive, but what's the point of playing a game if the possibility of winning isn't there? It was even a cheap version of the game. People kept using props. No, they weren't using them in their actions, they were pointing to them because that's what the word was. There's no mystery or fun in that. Grandma was surprisingly one of the few true actors of the evening. She drew poison, and she collapsed herself onto the ground after drinking from an imaginary bottle. I would have never guessed my grandma would fall for a game before. Then we played the holiday classic game of our family: spoons. Now if you've never played, let me warn you, depending who you are playing with the game can be a bit

treacherous. Keep a wary eye on your limbs especially your hands and fingers when reaching for the spoon grail. All three little cousins played which made things interesting. Cadin and Carrie got out early on, while Jacob won. We had to let one of them when. When he won, we all started congratulating him and giving him high-fives. His face shone with such joy and boyish pride, then his sister began bawling because she had lost. She had been semi-okay with losing until he started getting all the attention for winning, huh funny how that happened. After one more round of spoons, it was time to go home.

Once home we played a few rounds of euchre and set up the tree. Ornaments would have to stay in their box for one more day, so we could go comatose from all of the food we had consumed.

(Written November 07, Revised February, 25, 2008)

Prompt # 5: Typical Summer Day (Sensory Details)

Write a short piece on a typical summer day during your childhood. Be sure to use sensory details. (Show us.)

Sounds of Summer

I remember the rhythm of the purple-rimmed black trampoline that commandeered a portion of our lawn from mid-spring to late fall. We could be heard jumping on its flexible back almost every day of summer. The metal gate's latch creaking as it was being pushed towards the sky, and then clanging back into place when it returned. Bare feet pounded across the grass as a cousin or two entered the arena. My sister, brother, and I would have already begun jumping. If there were shoes worn that day, they would immediately be thrown onto the ground with a thud. As more people piled on and others jumped, the springs would groan and squeal with each bounce, enjoying stretching out in the sun. Our voices would chatter excitedly when the opportunity to create a new game arose. Our feet would pound to our spots when beginning a familiar game. The trampoline sounded like a zipper when we skidded across to reach the other tag without getting tagged. The squeals of the springs hit every note in their range during ball tag. The breeze would wrestle the leaves that hung far above our heads. A groan would escape lips when Jill would be spotted. Sometimes if we kept jumping, she would either stay there or call over to us from her yard. After a brief exchange of hollers, she too entered the gate and hopped on. Sometimes we leapt off with a thump, our feet swishing through the grass and thudding onto the deck, as they lead the way to slurp on juice, letting the screen door slam behind us.

(February 1, 2008)

Prompt #6: Remembering the Region You're From

What will stay with you about/from the region you grew up in even if you move far away? Write a creative paragraph or poem.

Midwest at Heart

Becoming a caterpillar
To inch my way closer
To your cocoon

Holding onto your arm
Letting your shoulder
Bear the weight of my mind

Eyes sealing off themselves
Skin soaking up late summer rays
Spirit breathing in country air

Yearning to mold this moment
In concrete
Not trusting my fickle memory
To grasp on
Knowing it can't be the same

Releasing my eyes
Watching afternoon shadows romp
Across the steering wheel

Eyes being drawn to your hands
Those unswerving hands
The counterpart to my own

Floating out the window
Viewing the oceanic sky
Seeing the forest of crops
All of those greens waving poetically
Intermittent patches of gold dazzling

Summer Midwest countryside scenes
No matter how far I may roam - they'll be with me

(July 17, 2008)

Prompt #7: Outside Pressures

What are some of the pressures you face that can be attributed to society, culture, gender, station, and/or the family you are situated in? (Pick one: Train of Consciousness, Poem, Informal Essay)

A Good Butterfly

Somewhere down wind
It became ingrained in me
To be good
To be A good everything
It became a want
The want chrysalised
Festering and mutating in it's green wrappings
Until the butterfly broke loose
Turning it into a need
The need to be
A good daughter
A good friend
A good student
A good Christian
A good person
A good

Tonight -how much my life is ruled by striving to be good
Knocked me over with the force of a locomotive.
Can I ever be good enough?
Am I even close?
How had I never realized?
But now that I have,
So what?
It's not going to change;
The butterfly has already transformed once.
Can I metamorphosize again?
Do I even want to?
Am I happy like this?
I was before now.
Wasn't I?

(March 2008)

Prompt #8: Miscommunication

Write a poem about misunderstandings/miscommunication in general or tell a short story about a specific instance where this occurred.

Speaking in Tongues

You're speaking a tongue
I struggle to hear
I always think I know
Exactly what you're saying
I used to
Or maybe I never did

I try to follow
But become a lost puppy
Time after time
I'm a linguistic failure

I hunt for Waldo
In his taunting stripes
Yet he eludes me
And I find Wilma instead

Your words are like a poem
I loved and understood
Til someone fills my head with analysis
I can't shake

You say jump
And I say what was that
Oh you want to play leap frog
Okay, you go first

(I wrote this for English 285 in fall of 2008)

Prompt #9: Children's Rhymes

Pick a line from a children's song or nursery rhyme that you grew up with. Now use that line as the title and write a poem to fit it.

The Cheese Stands Alone

"Yo, who cut the cheese?"
Poor Blu looks grated
That someone knifed Cheddar.
"He did it!" cried a shrill voice.
"You don't know Jack!" yelled Provolone.
"Where's Easy Cheese?
He's supposed to be the whiz kid."
Snooty Parmesan takes a whirl at solving it,
As does every other dairy product in the joint.
Finally, after more finger pointing
The most aged cheese of them all steps forward.
"The guilty cheese always stands alone."
Everyone turns to face ol' reliable Colby
Standing aloof with his scotch.

(February 12, 2008)

Prompt #10: Identifying Archetypes

Write a paragraph: Do you see similar characters present in texts from multiple cultures? What sort of characters? What other thoughts do you have on this?

Most stories I have read have at least one significantly good and one mainly evil character. Sometimes more sophisticated stories blur the line between good and evil (i.e. The Watchmen). However, most of the time there is a clear hero and villain. Those two characters seem to surpass this country's borders and be universal figures throughout time and across the globe. I would guess that they are the two oldest characters in story telling. There are other characters that I have seen pop up repeatedly. In fairy tales there are often a helpful character that possesses magic, sometimes there's a character that tries to fool everyone else and/or lies, a lot of them seem to have women in distress, royal figures show up a lot, and I'm sure there are more that I cannot remember at the moment. I think it's interesting that I switched my focus to fairy tales. I think it's because that's one of the oldest literary forms. Another reason is that fairy tales often have flat characters so it is easy to tell which person is being molded into which character. Those types of characters also seem to be repeated in other texts, just in a more complicated fashion.

(April 4, 2009)

Prompt #11: What's In a Name

Names are historically an important representation of a person and their family. Different cultures may have different names and/or different ways of using names, but all cultures value names. The same name may mean the same thing or different things to different cultures. Write a poem or short story about your name. Possible things to include: Why were you given that name? What does your name mean? How do people say it? What does it mean to you? You are more than welcome to take various other routes with this prompt. (Can tie in with House on Mango Street web)

JoyAnn: (joi – an) Proper noun. My first name.

Joann grates my eardrums like a microphone squealing out of frequency. Why is the “y” so illusive? I don’t consider myself to be a trickster, but my name has a tendency to fool most ears it reaches. JoyAnn. Odds are you’re pronouncing it correctly as your eyes carry the word to your brain and your brain graciously announces it for you. People can usually read my name correctly when they give themselves a second to process the unfamiliar pairing. Those that have tried to read it in a rush come up with sometimes ridiculous alternatives, Joannie for example. I often say my own name rather quickly, but I do try to deliberately speak it slower and enunciate. No matter what I do, I almost always have to say it twice on an audience’s first listen.

My name has spent its life on the chopping block, waiting for the next person to come along and butcher it to shreds. My sister’s name was to be RaeAnn Joy. Joy is my mother’s middle name. Then the egg split and I developed alongside RaeAnn. When my parents found out they had two children in the delivery room, something had to be done about a name for me. My mother decided RaeAnn Denise and JoyAnn Kay would do nicely. The spelling throws off everyone. Yes, the A is capitalized. No, there is not a space. No, Ann is not my middle name. Yes, I have a middle name. These are some questions I’ve answered at a fairly high frequency rate.

Most people, upon hearing my name for the first time, either awkwardly stumble over it only to have it fall to pieces on the floor as they try to repeat it as a question, prompting me to repeat it. The repetition is often met with them repeating step one until their brows un-furrow themselves and it clicks. The quicker folks that get it after once cycle through often remark that they think it’s pretty or that they’ve never heard that before. No shock there.

As the past few years have gone by, an increasing number of people have begun calling me Joy. It began with just a few, but then those few started introducing me to everyone they knew as Joy and it became a new fad. I’ve also learned that upon meeting children and inebriated individuals it saves everyone time and confusion for me to introduce myself as Joy. Despite all the butchering and frustration, I still introduce myself as JoyAnn to everyone besides the two exceptions. I don’t even really pay heed to who calls me Joy and who calls me JoyAnn. They receive the same reaction from my synapses and I.

Despite my Ball State correspondences never capitalizing my A, people everywhere mispronouncing my name with misguided confidence, and the question mark that never seems to be too far away from following my name, I’ve always been satisfied. While I can understand the capital A and lack of a space being a hurdle for people’s

brains to run into, I have never understood the trouble with the pronunciation. Joy and Ann, two words that are so easy to say become so difficult when smashed together. Somehow I feel that suits me.

(April 18, 2009)

Hiding the Seams by Weaving in Culture Webs

JoyAnn Hirschy



The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indiana
By Sherman Alexie
Webbing Activities for a 9th Grade English Classroom

Frontloading

Quotes/Opinionaire: Have a list of quotes or statements relating to the theme of the unit. Have students check the ones they agree with.

Fact Find: KWL Chart on Native America/reservation culture. What they know already, what they want to know (fact find), and what they learn from others research.

Character Quotes: Give each small group a set of quotes from a character, each group has a different character. Groups report their decided description and predictions about the character.

During Reading

Double entry journal: Keep track of quotes/scenes from the book that are confusing, prompt questions, or that you otherwise feel inclined to respond to. Use this as a tool during discussion.

Stop & Draw: Pick a place in the text that you think needs a picture. Draw one in Junior's style. Share why you made the choices you did.

Idea Man: Choose a character to make an idea man of. Continue working on this and adding to it until finished with book.

Post-reading

Quotes/Opinionaire: Use the same list as the frontload. Have students pick one Junior would most agree with. Write a 1 page paper explaining why.

Comic Book: Draw some panels of what happens next after the book's last pages or of a deleted scene. Emulate Junior's style or create your own.

Tableaux Drama: Small groups individually agree on the most important scene and create a snapshot of it complete with expressions, body language, etc. Explain the choices.

Web for Helen Frost's *Keesha's House*

Pre-reading

Free write: Have students write about a theme that will connect prior knowledge/experience to the text and unit theme (i.e. relationships, family, social issues, poetry).

Intro to Forms: Introduce and explain the sestina and sonnet. Discuss this form and how to read it (possibly review how to read poetry or poetic elements in general).

Quotes/Opinionaire: Have a list of quotes or statements relating to the theme of the unit. Have students check the ones they agree with. Discuss and/or put away for later.

Character Quotes: Give each small group a set of quotes from a character, each group has a different character. Groups report their decided description and predictions about the character.

During Reading

Stop! Predict: Stop between two of the parts (right before part V would be a good spot) and predict. Could do one in depth prediction for one character or brief predictions for all.

Character Letter: Part III-V pick a spot and character and stop. Either write a letter to that character or write a letter as that character.

Idea Man: Pick a character by the end of Part II and make an idea mean. Keep adding to this as you learn more about the character as you read.

Dialogue with Character: Choose a character and write up a conversation you would have.

Post-reading

Real World: Do some research and share the information with the class. Focus: What are real statistics on run away teens and teen issues? How do these compare to the story? Discuss.

Missing character: Pretend Frost left out a character. Create a new character and write a minimum of 4 poems in sonnet or sestina form about his/her story.

Quotes/Opinionaire: Have a list of quotes or statements relating to the theme of the unit. Have students check the ones they agree with. Did any change? Why or why not? Discuss.

Journalism: Either write a 1 page feature article or write opposing editorial view points (1/2 page each) on the house and its inhabitants for a newspaper.

Web for Adeline Yen Mah's *Chinese Cinderella: The true story of an unwanted daughter*

Pre-reading

Lecture and Reading: Discuss the genre of memoir and non-fiction with the students. Have them read a few short non-fiction stories before reading the book.

Predictions from the title: What do the students predict this story is about? What characters may be included? What events may occur? Write a short paragraph & discuss.

Historical Context: Tell the students what historical context is. Discuss the importance. Ask them to fill out a historical context worksheet for their novel.

What do you know: The K of KWL. Students write and discuss what they already know about the U.S. and other country during the time period. Have them also start creating an informal timeline.

During Reading

Venn Diagram: Compare the two countries during the time period covered in the book. Consider the events and cultures as a class. Have them pick one other area to research and add to the diagram on their own.

Prediction Sheet: Ask the class to pick a minimum of 6 places to stop and make predictions (a short paragraph each) as they read. The teacher has the option to choose the places for them to make predictions.

Letter to Character: Write a letter to the character. (On p. 131 of Mah's story Adeline says that her one wish is to receive a letter.)

What do you want to know: The W. Students brainstorm what else they want or need to know to appreciate the story. They fill out a research worksheet & add to their timelines.

Post-reading

Memoir Write: Have students write a short memoir about a time period or event. Require the use of at least one element from the book (*Chinese Cinderella* examples: historical context, fairy tale allusion).

Evaluating Predictions: Reflect on the predictions from both the pre & during reading activities. For those that were not correct explain what caused you to arrive at that decision. Were they unfounded or defensible?

Choose a Representation: Ask students to select an object to represent a main character. Write a two paragraphs minimum explaining. Support reasoning with the text. Bring in the object and share with group.

What did you learn: The L. Students reflect in writing about what they learned from the text, their research, and discussions. They will brainstorm how this knowledge may be useful.

While these activities were inspired by *Chinese Cinderella*..., it is an emotionally challenging text and probably not one I would require of the whole class. However, I would include as a choice for small book groups. I kept the activities broad enough to be easily used with any memoir that involves history and a country that is not the U.S. I feel those memoirs are easily found and would fit in well with the example text and this web.

Web for Sandra Cisneros' *The House on Mango Street*

Pre-reading

Creative Writing: Write a short creative piece about your name. Allow them to take home to do/finish. (Will tie in with p 10-11.)

Illustrated Quick Write: Write a paragraph or two describing the neighborhood you grew up in. Draw an of aerial view of the layout.

Word Brainstorm: What does the word "home" make you think of? What do you associate with that word? Brainstorm a web or list.

Read Poem: Read Marilyn Nelson Waniek's poem "The House on Moscow Street." Discuss the themes and messages of the poem¹.

During Reading

Similes: Jot down some of Sandra Cisneros' creative similes and metaphors as you go. Answer questions from the worksheet.

Neighborhood Map: Start drawing an aerial map/layout of Esperanza's neighborhood. Add characters and buildings as we go through the text.

Vocabulary: There will be a worksheet for students with words from the text and definitions to aide their reading. Also provide space for them to add other words and their definitions they do not know.

Addressing the Issues: Pick a cultural issue (i.e. absent father, domestic abuse, poverty). Write a paragraph explaining how that issue is depicted in and effects the story.

Post-reading

Similes Part 2: Picture a scene in your head (or look at one in real life). Write a creative paragraph using a minimum of two inventive metaphors/similes.

Consider Neighborhoods: Brainstorm how your neighborhood affected your upbringing. Now brainstorm the same for Esperanza. Discuss. (Could be a pre-writing activity for The House on Your Street)

Years Later....: Pretend you are Esperanza ten or more years after writing this book. Write a creative essay. Where are you now? How do you see Mango Street now? How have you changed? How are you the same?

The House on Your Street: Write a creative non-fiction piece about your house and neighborhood. Write in your own style, emulate Cisneros' style, write in poetry, illustrate it, or any of thousands others of possibilities.

¹Waniek, Nelson Marilyn. "The House on Moscow Street." Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry. Ed. Maria Mazziotti Gillan and Jennifer Gillan. New York: Penguin Books, 1994. 307-08.

Hiding the Seams by Weaving in Culture Resources

JoyAnn Hirschy



Lists of Recommended and Potential Resources

Recommended Teacher Resource Books

- Burke, Jim. The English Teacher's Companion: A Complete Guide to the Classroom, Curriculum, and the Profession. Third Ed. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2008.
- Chapman, Carolyn and Rita King. Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Reading in the Content Areas. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc., 2003.
- Gillan, Maria Mazziotti and Jennifer Gillan Ed. Unsettling America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry. New York: Penguin Books, 1994.
- Rice, Linda J. What Was It Like?: Teaching History and Culture Through Young Adult Literature. New York: Teachers College Press, 2006.
- Wilhelm, Jeffrey D. Strategic Reading: Guiding Students to Lifelong Literacy 6-12. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2008.

Cultural books that I would recommend for use in a secondary classroom:

- *Keesha's House* by Helen Frost
- *Night* by Elie Wiesel
- *I Have Lived a Thousand Years* by Livia-Bitton Jackson
- *House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros
- *Chinese Cinderella: The true story of an unwanted daughter* by Adeline Yen Mah
- *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak
- *Middlesex* by Jeffrey Eugenides
- *Lay That Trumpet in Our Hands* by Susan Carol McCarthy
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee
- *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie

Cultural books I plan to read that have potential for the secondary classroom:

- *Sold* by Patricia McCormick
- *Dark Dude* by Oscar Hijuelos
- *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd
- *American Born Chinese* by Gene Lee Yang
- *Parrot in the Oven: Mi Vida* by Victor Martinez
- *Year of Impossible Goodbyes* by Sook Nyul Choi
- *Street Love and Scorpions* by Walter Dean Myers
- *Does my Head Look Big in This?* by Randa Abdel-Fattah
- *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Munoz Ryan
- *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood* by Ibtisam Barakat
- *Children of the River* by Linda Crew
- *Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution* by Ji-li Jiang
- *The Full Spectrum: A New Generation of Writing About Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Other Identities* by David Levithan and Billy Merrell
- *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok
- *White Teeth: A Novel* by Zadie Smith

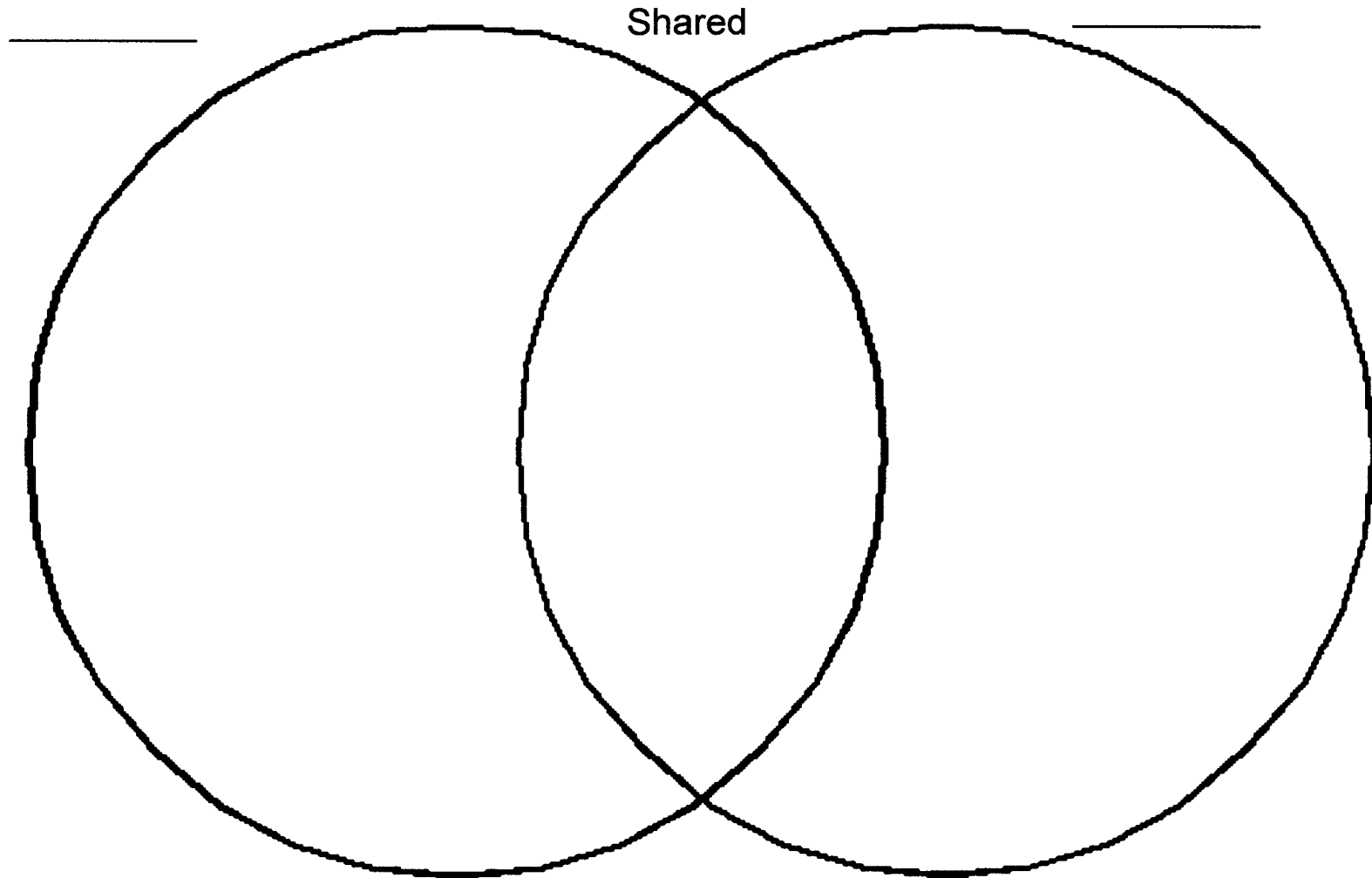
- *When My Name was Keoko* by Linda Sue Park
- *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* by Julia Alvarez
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston

Cultural movies that I think have potential for the classroom:

- *Smoke Signals*
- *Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam*
- *In the Arms of Strangers*
- *God Grew Tired of Us*
- *Iraq in Fragments*
- *War Letters: American Experience*
- *Rabbit-Proof Fence*
- *Hoop Dreams*

Venn Diagram

Worksheets like this can be used for the *Chinese Cinderella* web activity of comparing two countries during a certain time period, for the students to compare fairytales in the Fairytale Versions lesson plan, and more.



Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

These boxes can be used for the Comic Book activity on *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* web, a Stop, Draw, Predict activity and more.

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Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

KWL Chart

Topic: _____

K (What I know)	W (What I want to know)	L (What I've learned)

This page and the following page show examples of poems that would fit the America lesson plan well.

60

Unsettling America

Failure of an Invention

i am not any of the faces
you have put on me america

every mask has slipped
i am not any of the names

or sounds you have called me
the tones have nearly

made me deaf
this dark skin, both of us

have tried to bleach
i can smell the cancer.

this thick hair, these thick lips
both of us have tried to narrow

begging entrance through
the needle of your eye

some of me broken
in the squeeze

and even as I carry
a bone of yours in my back

your soul america
no matter what we've tried

i've never been able to bear

Safiya Henderson-Holmes

Performing

119

*but first we must each eat an Indian taco.
 Then, we get in a circle and hop,
 propelled by taco gas and prize money.
 Later, we hock our commodes
 and let our kids go wild and hungry
 as we drink, bingo, and drive endlessly
 looking for hints of feathered warriors
 and hoping for beauty,
 that great empty word.
 Yes, hoping for beauty,
 that great wingless bird."*

Adrian C. Louis

Immigrants

wrap their babies in the American flag,
 feed them mashed hot dogs and apple pie,
 name them Bill and Daisy,
 buy them blonde dolls that blink blue
 eyes or a football and tiny cleats
 before the baby can even walk,
 speak to them in thick English,
 hallo, babee, hallo,
 whisper in Spanish or Polish
 when the babies sleep, whisper
 in a dark parent bed, that dark
 parent fear, "Will they like
 our boy, our girl, our fine American
 boy, our fine American girl?"

Pat Mora

Both poems are from:

Gillan, Maria Mazziotti and Jennifer Gillan Ed. Unsettling
 America: An Anthology of Contemporary Multicultural Poetry.
 New York: Penguin Books, 1994.

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Use this to aid in your understanding of the text, reflect on what you have read, and as a springboard for discussions during class.

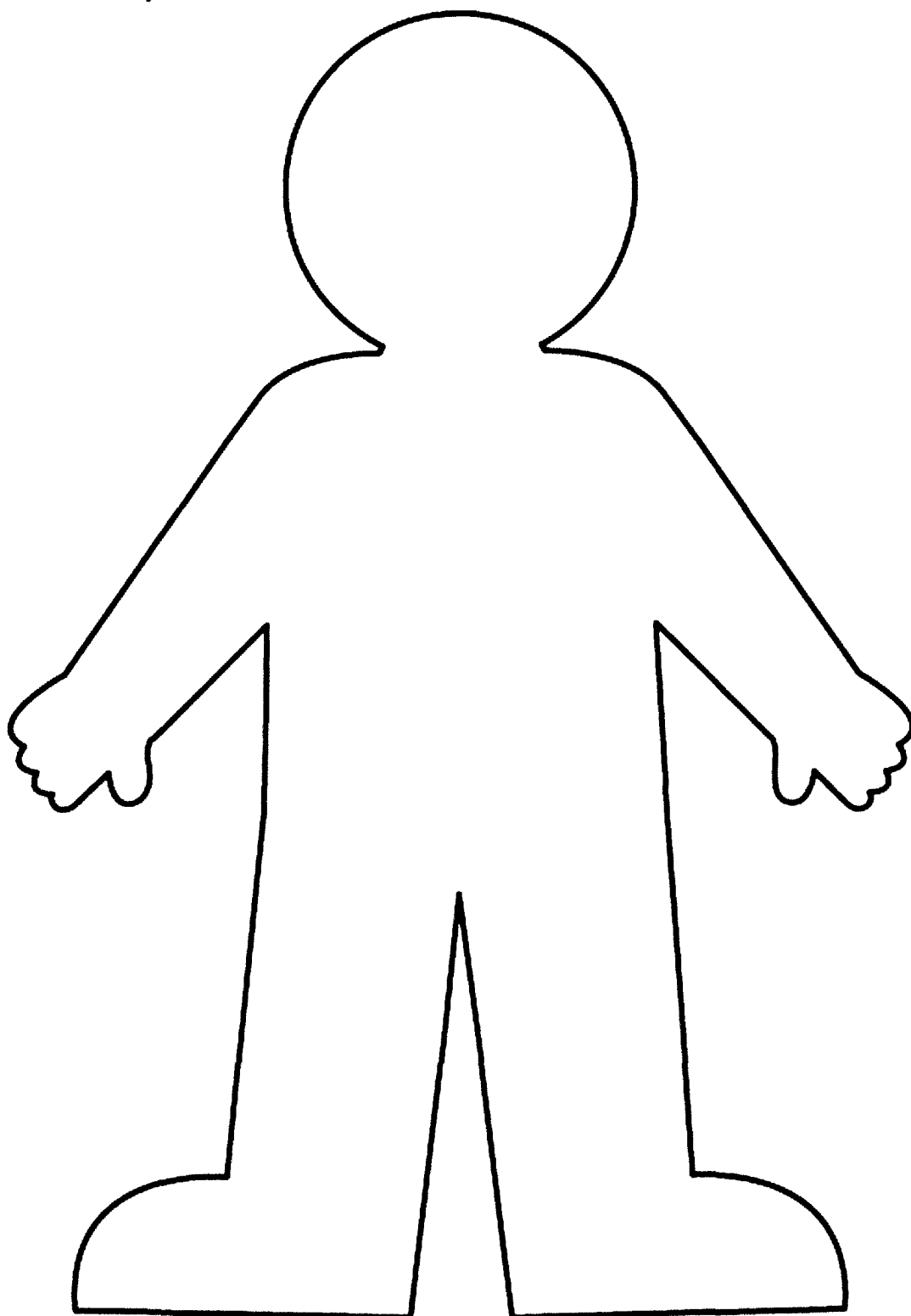
Double-Entry Journal

Provoking Quotes/Scenes (include page numbers)

My responses, thoughts, confusions, and/or questions

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Now that we've made an idea man of the main character together as a class. Pick another character from the book and begin an Idea Man. Continue adding to the Idea Man throughout the rest of your reading of the book. Your images can be as symbolic or literal as you choose. Just make sure everything has a reason. If you don't like this silhouette - feel free to draw your own on the back or another sheet.



Quick write Rubric

Points	2	0
Did they follow and address the prompt?	Yes	No
Did they write coherently and legibly?	Yes	No
Did they write at least 5 sentences?	Yes	No

Total: ____ / 6